1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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SOCIAL CUSTOMS.

The Gros Ventre system of terms of relationship has been given in a former publication.[1]

Cousins, so far as the relationship was known, were called brothers and sisters, and they called each other's children son or daughter if the cousin was of the same sex as the speaker, or nephew or niece if the cousin was of the opposite sex. Any known relationship was a bar to marriage. The brother of a dead man sometimes married his widow, but this was not always the case.

Large amounts of property, especially horses, were given away for wives for the honor of the act, but there was no rule or definite custom covering the quantity of property so given. The horses might be given not only to the father, but to the brothers, uncles, and other relatives of the girl. Sometimes, without having received any gifts and apparently without any previous understanding, a man would give his daughter to a young man, who thereupon would give him horses, or distribute them among his wife's other relatives. Old men practised this custom in order to obtain the aid and services of a young man in caring for their horses and in other ways, and no doubt sometimes also to insure a more certain food-supply. A young man on marrying received a tent with all the proper furniture, usually from his prospective parents-in-law, but sometimes from his own parents, if they were the wealthier.

Although a young married man often lived with his father-in-law, the well-known taboo custom between mother-in-law and son-in-law — which forbade their speaking, looking at each other, or being in the same tent — existed among the Gros Ventre. There was, however, no father-in-law taboo. The mother-in-law taboo extended to the son-in-law's brother.

If a woman did not wish a man for her lover, she might send him to do a certain act of bravery. If he returned successfully from war, having accomplished the deed, he was then accepted. This custom is said to have led to the death of many young men.

At a person's death his property was inherited generally by his relatives. His father and mother, brothers, sisters, and children would receive part. His father and mother received the most. A man often disposed of his property before his death. If he died suddenly, as on being killed in war, his parents divided his property. It was not customary for a man on going to war to divide his property among his relatives in the contingency of his death. Property particularly valued by the dead person was buried with him.

[1] Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part I, pp. 9, 180.

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A wife inherited practically nothing from her husband. If she had been faithful to him and had been of a good disposition, her parents-in-law might give her a certain number of horses or other property. The tent was considered the woman's possession while she lived with her husband; but on his death, even this was no longer her property. If the tent was worth keeping at all, it generally went to the dead man's sister, if she was newly married. A man, on the contrary, inherited his wife's property, though he generally gave back part of it to her relatives.

A woman, on her husband's death, went back to live with her parents, or, if these were dead, with her brother, uncle, or other relative. An old woman, on the death of her husband, generally went to live with her children, most frequently with a daughter.

On the death of a brother, especially a beloved one, or of his father or his son, a man cut his hair and went out naked (with only a buffalo robe) on the prairie to cry from morning until late at night. Women, besides cutting their hair, and cutting themselves (especially on the leg) until they bled, would also go out to cry, naked from the waist up. A sister cut herself for a brother, but a mother mourning for a child underwent the most pain. Of course the mourning was greatest for an only child. In such a case, parents might give away everything in their tent and nearly all their horses, stripping themselves of property so thoroughly as almost to go naked. Some mourners fasted for a number of days. If, while a person was crying on the prairie, one should in joke attempt to scare him, he might kill the disturber. Mourners were the bravest people in war, caring about no danger whatever.

Burial was in trees, on high rocks, or in caves inaccessible to wolves and coyotes. The corpse was wrapped in a burial robe.

A menstruating woman was called niniitixtj. It is said that she did not retire to a separate lodge, or eat separately from her family; but she did not approach a sick patient, because of the evil effect she would have on his condition by her presence. Some women were said to wear a breech-cloth during their menstruation.

In childbirth, women either lay or knelt. They grasped a stick supported in a horizontal position by two upright forked sticks set in the ground. After the umbilical cord had been severed, the end was left on the child. It was thought to fall off on the fourth day. The woman who had cut the umbilical cord received as a gift the knife she had used. A woman who washed a new-born child was given the vessel in which it was washed. The afterbirth was hung in a tree. If it were left lying to be handled, the child would be afflicted with sores. For three or four days after birth, the child was given suck by other women than its mother. This statement apparently refers chiefly to a woman's first child.

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534 The large amount of individual variation within the limits of the general type characterizing these rattles occurs apparently also among the Arapaho star-rattles.

746 In the war-dance as it was held when first introduced, there were two men who had wands representing swords, and several wearing the familiar [293] belts of crow-feathers with tails falling behind and projections at the lower part of the back. As among the Arapaho, these belts are referred to the [534] crow. A drum was used, made of a cottonwood board or slab bent into a circle, covered both above and below with horse-skin, and hung on four sticks. Four drumsticks went with it, one of which belonged to the owner of the drum, the three others to three different individuals. The sides of the drum were covered, half with red cloth and half with blue, and the skin was painted half blue and half yellow. When the men who owned the swords, the crow-belts, and the drum, gave these away, which they generally did at [431] the same time, a dance was held. The new owners, in turn, by giving the objects to their successors, would furnish the occasion for another performance of the dance.

The war-dancers dressed quite variously. Some wore skunk-skin strips around the leg below the knee, beaded, and with small bells attached. Some wore similar strips around the head. Others had the well-known upright head-dress of deer-tail hair. Some carried fans of eagle-tails; some, whips; some, painted sticks with attached feathers. The dancing went on in a lodge similar to that of the star-dancers. The owner of the drum had his tent near this lodge in the middle of the camp-circle, and the members of the dance went to him to eat. If the head man of the star-dancers was popular, he was asked by the rival war-company to pitch his tent in the middle of the camp-circle, near the owner of the war-dance drum. There are said to have been no assistants in this ceremony, nor any old men as singers; but four of the wives of the dancers were selected to sing. The two men [624] with swords (kakaat) had functions similar to those of the two mounted men 626 with whips in the star-dance. They urged the laggard dancers to get up, and, if they fell down, struck them with their wands. If the man thus struck bore the blow like a man, as the Indians call it, the sword-bearer made him a present; but if he became angry he received nothing, and appears to have been looked upon with ridicule or contempt.

The war-dance as at present given is different from the form described. It is no longer a young men's dance, nor confined to a certain group. All the people of the tribe take part in it. It is very similar in general character to the present-day Arapaho crow-dance, as well as in the place it occupies in the life of the people. Among the Gros Ventre it is now the only dance held.

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hand, according as they belonged to one division or the other. Vessels of water were ready to pour on the racers in order to cool them. The four "brothers," the dancers previously separate from the rest at the eastern end of the lodge, did not run with the crowd, but started out slowly together, their faces covered with their robes. They trotted at a slow pace over the same course as the other dancers. As they returned, long after the crowd, the boys, young men, and young women of the camp, had gathered on both sides, and pelted them with buffalo-chips until they reached the dancing-lodge. There is, in this slow following of the pledger and his three companions, a reminiscence of the white-fool, the dancer of highest degree in the Arapaho crazy-lodge, who on all occasions contrasts by his slow movements with the other dancers.[1] After the return of all the dancers, they presented horses loaded with property to their "grandfathers," and these made similar presents to them. These gifts seem to have been payments to the old men for their instruction and painting, and to have been made at the conclusion of the part of the ceremony which was under their control. From this time on, the dancers' wives returned to their tents, and took no further part in the ceremony.

After this followed two observances. It is not certain which of the two came first. A crowd of people were waiting for the dancers in the open. The dancers, wearing their best moccasins put on loosely without being tied, left the lodge; and the waiting people, mostly women and children, ran after them, pulling off their moccasins, and, when they could not succeed in doing so otherwise, seizing their feet, and tripping them as they went. The dancers did not try to escape, or save their moccasins, but allowed them to be taken. Or, again, an old man who was poor was selected, and, having been given a pipe to smoke in order that he might accept, he went to the east of the camp-circle. A buffalo robe was brought, incensed four times with sweet-grass placed on burning charcoal or buffalo-chips, and then placed over the old man, with the hair side out, as, bent over, he knelt on the ground. The dancers gathered about him, and

[1] According to an Arapaho account obtained, somewhat different from those previously utilized, there are two white-fools, not one. It is not clear which information is more correct. The white-fools always follow the dancers. If one of the ordinary dancers should be behind them, he would become unable to move. This is the result of any violation of a rule of the ceremony by a participant. In such cases the white-fools have the power to cure them by taking off their owl-feather head-bands, and rubbing them over the body with them. The white-fools are addressed as beiçâbihin ("sisters-in-law," strictly, "brother or sister-in-law" of opposite sex from the speaker). The dancers, to look at a person, put their head to the ground, and pretend to look with their rump. They throw dung into tents, calling it "food." If people look at them through awl-holes in a tent, they at once shoot the tent in that place. Going out on the prairie, they say, "Let us not shoot into the air," and shoot up. When the arrows fall in plain sight, they cannot find them: if they fall into brush or tall grass, they find them at once. They imitate, often with obscene renderings, anything that they hear, such as a person's speech, or a dog's bark. They paralyze dogs by pointing at them an arrow to which tetcâtcel is attached. They give the dogs they kill to their "grandfathers" to eat. As soon as they take off their head-bands, they become rational. Mooney's account of the Cheyenne and Arapaho crazy-dance, which seems to refer chiefly to the former, mentions two white-fools; compare Ghost-Dance Religion, op. cit., 1033.

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the old man who had directed the ceremony stood by him. Until this time, the dancers' bows, which were to play so prominent a part in the dance of the next four days, had been unstrung. Each of the dancers carried a pair of moccasins in his belt, or perhaps some other property. The pledger now came up to have his bow stretched. The old man in charge of the dance, receiving the bow from him, rested it on the back of the crouching old man. Four times he bent it, and the fourth time slipped the string into its notch. Then he untied the three arrows from the bow and gave them to the young man, who put his moccasins or other gift under the croucher's robe. Another and another dancer came up with his bow, until all their bows had been strung on the back of the old man, and his robe swelled out from the accumulating gifts.

While the bows were being strung, the people took down the dancing-lodge, which, by the time of the return of the dancers to the centre of the camp-circle, was completely gone. The dancers now stood in a circle while the old man in charge of the dance, or, according to another account, two of the "grandfathers," sang for them. The long stick with rattling hoofs was shaken, and the young men danced for four songs. At the end of each song, they aimed an arrow at the sky, making a motion of shooting, and crying "Yaa!" At the end of the fourth song, all shot as high up as they could. As the arrows fell back they did not try to avoid them, and, it is said, were never hit. By this time the people had watered their horses and done whatever outdoor work was necessary, and retired to their tents, for, immediately after shooting into the air, the dancers rushed in all directions; and from this moment they had full liberty about the camp, except indoors, for four days. Any one seen outside of a tent was shot with the soft blunt arrows. He was pursued amid shots and blowing of whistles. If a man was caught, he was made to sit down, and all the dancers, seeing what was happening, gathered. If he rode, he was pursued on horseback until he was overtaken, whereupon he would say, "Do not wait: I will not give you a dance," meaning "Wait: I will give you a dance." Then they stood about him, and he sang and they danced. At the end of his song, every one shouted "Yaa!" and kicked him until he was knocked over. Perhaps he would say, "Kick me hard." Then they would barely touch him. Sometimes he said, "Now you must kill me." If, however, he said, "Do not hurt me," he would be hurt severely. Scarcely any one went out during these four days, except, of course, the dancers' "grandfathers," who were exempt from annoyance.

The pointed arrow tied to each bow, and ordinarily not loosened, was prayed over for each young man by his "grandfather;" and a piece of root esteemed as exceedingly powerful, and called tjitjäätsä" (Arapaho, tee-

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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411 796 tcäätcei), was attached to the shaft just behind the point. This root is the well-known poisonous wild parsnip. The arrow-point seems to have been painted blue. Even a slight scratch with this arrow was, on account of the power of the medicine, supposed to cause fits and death. The theory was, that if any one became angry under the unbridled annoyances of the crazy-dancers, and attempted to resist, he would be shot with this arrow. It is, of course, extremely unlikely that this ever actually occurred, or, if it did, the offender was, as among the Arapaho, no doubt immediately cured by the dancers from his imaginary convulsions or paralysis. If buffalo were driven among the tents of the camp-

[293]

Fig. 34.

Fig. 35.

Fig. 34 (50-1884 b). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 29 cm.
Fig. 35 (50-1884 c). Crazy-dance Regalia. Length, 23 cm.

circle, they were shot with these arrows, and are believed to have been killed, even if only very slightly wounded. Dogs were also killed in this way.

796 After four days of this playing, the ceremony ended. At its conclusion the bows were given away to boys who were relatives of the dancers; but the other regalia were kept, as the dance was not infrequently repeated.

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for the ends of the streamers of this robe have been preserved in a few sets of these regalia. The head-band, leglets, anklets, and feather and fur attachments of the bow, also exist in two or more sets in the Museum. They agree entirely, so that only the set shown in Figs. 34, 35, 36, and 37, need be described. This set lacks only the whistle and whistle necklace, which have been supplied from another set (see Plate XII).

The bow (see Plate XII) is three feet long, an inch wide, nearly rectangular in cross-section, unbacked, and slightly reddened. At each end is tied a piece of skin slit into seven fringes, to the end of each of which is wrapped a crow-wing feather. At the middle of the bow is tied a strip of bear-skin a foot long and an inch or less wide. With this are six owl-feathers, — all to be held to the bow, it will be remembered, together with some sage, by a thong. The pieces of owl-skin for the streamers on the robe (Fig. 34) need no comment. The anklets of badger-skin are (Fig. 35) a foot long, an inch or more wide, tied together by two thongs, and near one end have four small hoofs attached. The head, leg, and neck bands differ from one another only in length and in attachments. They consist of a strip of skin a quarter of an inch wide, completely wrapped with yellow porcupine-quills. In four places are areas extending about half an inch, that are covered with dark-brown fibres. Attached to the head-band (Fig. 36) is part of a small owl-skin, including one of the mandibles. The whistle on the neck-band (Plate XII) is made of the wing-bone of an eagle or similar bird, and appears to be unornamented. It has been broken. At one end of the leg-bands (Fig. 37) are four small crow-feathers, attached by red-painted thongs.

The Kit-Fox Dance.

The kit-fox dance, the next in order after the crazy-dance, was called nouha"wu; and the dancers, nouhunen ("kit-fox men"). In its general course this ceremony was exactly analogous to the first part of the crazy-dance. For four nights, the dancers' wives went out with their "grandfathers" to receive medicine, and for four days, the dancers themselves danced in the lodge erected in the centre of the camp-circle. On the fourth day of the ceremony, or "after four days," as the Indians say, the dancers went to the tent of a prominent chief and danced at his door, which was equivalent to asking him for gifts. The chief would give them horses and other property. Three other chiefs were accorded the same distinction. The camp thereupon broke, and the dancers, going ahead, put the property which they had received down on the ground in a row. The camp coming up, the brave men of the tribe made a charge on these things, as if they were

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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They also had rattles similar to those of the rank and file of dog-dancers,—a row of small hoofs attached to a stick,—except that the rattles of the ts00yanchin were forked instead of single. In addition they each had a long wooden whistle. 796 554 292

Some of the "grandfathers" are said also to have worn scarfs, like the dancers; but as these were made of pieces of old tent-skins, undecorated and ugly, it is probable that this action was intended to be ridiculous.

The "shaggy dog" took his whistle, forked rattle, and head-dress with him when he went to the lodge, but left his crow-feather-covered shirt behind. When he was in the lodge, a woman was sent for the shirt. She put it on, and went to the lodge, wearing it. Standing before the "shaggy dog," she pulled it off, and, holding it open at the bottom, moved four times as if to put it on him. The fourth time, she drew it over and on him. The place of the two "shaggy dogs" in the lodge was at the western end, the middle of the back.

The dog-lodge is described as having been constructed like the crazy-lodge, and to have had the same small screen or partial enclosure at the eastern end, facing the entrance of the lodge. 796 [346]

The beginning of the dancing was as follows. One of the old men who would sing, went in a circle four times. He was followed by the two "shaggy dogs." The old man began to sing and dance, and the two "shaggy dogs" whistled. When they moved to any distance away from him, the old man motioned and clicked to them, as one does to a dog. Then they danced toward him. After this, the rank and file of the dancers stood up and danced. Four servants of the dance, said to have been chiefs, sat in front of the small enclosure at the east. When they thought that the dancers had danced long enough, one of these went among them and said, "Friends, rest." Thereupon they all stopped dancing, standing in their places. Then this man told a war story. When the singers thought that the dancers had rested sufficiently, they began to sing and the members of the company took up their dancing again. Altogether they danced four times, being made to rest each time by the exhortation of an old man who told a war story. This dancing took place four days, during which period the dancers were supposed not to sleep.

When at night the dancers left the lodge and danced before the tents of chiefs, begging for gifts, the two "shaggy dogs" are said to have stood by the door of the tent. It is therefore probable that the body of the dancers formed a circle in front of the tent, as they do among the Arapaho on this occasion. When the owner of the tent had given them property, he pulled at the flaps hanging at the sides of the feather-covered shirts of the "shaggy dogs," whereupon they sat down and the dancing ceased. This dancing for gifts is said to have continued for four entire nights. [431]

1: Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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in the approach of the buffalo, even if previously there had been none in the vicinity of the camp. 796

The dancers carried representations of war-spikes or tomahawks, which apparently resembled the buffalo-shaped sticks of the first dance of the Arapaho. The sticks are described as being about as long as women's digging-sticks, and, like them, sharpened at one end. The other end, however, was bent. The stick was painted red, and a quill-embroidered strip of skin was wound around it as a handle. A buffalo-calf's tail and a bunch of buffalo-fetlocks, and no doubt other objects, were also attached. The stick was used as a rattle. 796 293 [534]

The conclusion of this ceremony presented a feature not found in the two preceding ones. According to one account, the gifts obtained by these dancers were received in payment from the spectators looking in at the lodge. After four days the camp broke, and followed the dancers. On reaching a place where the property had been laid on the ground, the people of the tribe stood in a long row, facing the east. One of the dancers filled a pipe, and selecting one of the poorest men in the camp offered it to him. When the old man took the pipe, the dancer prayed him to allow that all of his company should strike him (count coup on him). A bed of sage was then made for the old man in front of the assembled tribe. Along the edges of this bed, buffalo-chips were laid. The old man crouched on his hands and knees with his head toward the east, and, like the old man undergoing a similar humiliation in the crazy-dance, was covered with a buffalo robe the hair-side of which was turned out. The dancers faced him in a row and danced, rattling. After four songs they ran to the old man, and one after another struck him lightly, each placing beside him a moccasin or some other object, which the old man, on getting up, kept for himself. Then the dancers' "grandfathers" each picked up one of the buffalo-chips from the edges of the sage, and, when they had prepared them, one of the dancers squatted over each. Then his "grandfather," taking him by the shoulders, motioned with him four times, and the fourth time pushed him down. When they had all sat down, each "grandfather" spoke to his "grandson," telling him, "From now on, you need not be afraid to interrupt a sacred performance. You can talk obscenely to a chief, and no one will say anything to you." The people had been watching this performance, which marked the end of the dance. 888 796 [431]

The Biitaha^{N}w^{U}.

As stated, this dance has been abandoned a long time, and very little information was obtained regarding it. Men are alive who have seen it, 796

1; Kroeber E-5 (1901) 1908
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to the Arapaho "white-stand" and "red-stand" head-dresses of upright feathers surrounding the head. The dancers are described as all old or elderly women, which among the Arapaho was not the case. The exceptions were two participants called "calves" (nihanou, "yellow calves"), who were middle-aged, or, at any rate, adults. Among the Arapaho the "calves" were children. There is a further difference, that, whereas among the Arapaho the "calves" were of high degree in the dance and for the greater part of the time were not allowed to stir, the Gros Ventre "calves" took the place of the atsaan or servants in the men's dances. They are said to have worn no regalia. The dancers were painted with the symbol of a pipe on each cheek, close under the eye. Old men sang for them, rattling but not using a drum. The women in dancing shifted their weight from one side of the body to the other, and cried like crows. Two tent-poles, two pegs, and two ropes belonging to the dancing-lodge, were painted respectively one black and one red. On the fourth day of the ceremony there were observances outside of the dancing-lodge. A prominent chief was selected to take a burning stick. The dancers, moving and running about like a herd of buffalo, pretended to scent the smoke of his fire from windward, and stampeded. Another distinguished warrior pretended to shoot at the herd as if they were buffalo. Both of these features of the ceremony are found among the Arapaho. A third distinguished man (or perhaps several) was honored by being offered a pipe to smoke, and on his acceptance was given a vessel of water containing berries. He then gave away property.

The Sun-Dance.

As stated before, the Gros Ventre sun-dance, haçeiha^{n}w^{u}, is not restricted to men belonging to certain age-companies, but, as among the Arapaho, can be made by any man.[1] Like the other dances, however, it is made as the result of the pledge of an individual for deliverance from sickness or danger. As soon as the pledge has been publicly announced, or as soon thereafter as the buffalo begin to get fat in spring, the pledger and his relatives begin to accumulate buffalo-tongues, which they slice and dry like buffalo-meat. They also save a buffalo-skin, which is packed with the tongues, two sticks being wrapped up in it. When the time comes, a large lodge made of two tent-covers is set up in the middle of the camp-circle. Into this many women enter at night to sing. This marks the beginning of the ceremony. The tent is called tjinan^{n}w^{u} ("prairie-chicken lodge"); and the participants, "prairie-chickens" and "prairie-chicken women." The pledger brings his buffalo-skin to this lodge. He incenses it four times.

[1] See Bulletin of the American Museum of Natural History, Vol. XVIII, Part II, p. 182.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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175 they had been hard put to it recently to ransom thirty warriors
648 from the Crow—probably the wounded who had been abandoned in the panic following the ambush of 1832.[54]

So far as relations with the American traders go, in 1833 and subsequently the Gros Ventres were on their best behavior. Maximilian notes that the very large group of Gros Ventres, whom he met at the Judith River as he traveled with Mitchell of the American Fur Company on their way to Fort McKenzie, were surprisingly well-behaved. He adds, rightly enough, that it was to their self-interest to be so, in the light of the fact that formerly they had suffered with the traders on account of their bad reputation. He further remarks that the Gros Ventres were now known as dressing buffalo robes better than most of the other tribes. After trading a bit with the Gros Ventres where they met them, Mitchell invited them to meet him at Fort McKenzie. When the Gros Ventres arrived there, their chief men were received at the
[439] Fort with the same pomp and ceremony as were accorded the
● [431] Piegan chiefs in the preliminaries to actual trading. The Gros Ventres, too, upheld their end by bringing the usual presents—a horse and some beaver skins—to present to the trader.[55]

This Fort had been established at the mouth of the Marias, very close to the later site of Ft. Benton, and was known first as Fort Piekann and the next year was renamed Fort McKenzie. It had been established at this point for dealing with the Blackfoot groups, especially the Piegan, and the surrounding tribes. At that time the American Fur Company was particularly interested in obtaining beaver skins, and one beaver skin was worth two buffalo robes. Later, as the market for buffalo robes opened up, the beaver gradually lessened in value so that finally two or three beaver skins became the equivalent of one buffalo robe.[56] Lewis has emphasized what the change in market meant for the Blackfoot groups.[57] Relations of the Gros Ventres with the whites improved, and there was a tendency for the Gros Ventres to become more and

[54] Cf. Ewers, 1943, p. 603; Maximilian, pp. 71, 75, 76.
[55] Maximilian, pp. 75–76, 126, 165.
[56] Bradley, p. 203, note on 204.
[57] O. Lewis, pp. 34–59.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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In April, when the sap rises, the Gros Ventres scraped the juice from the inner bark peeled from cottonwood and sometimes even from box-elder. They also chewed the gum from pines. Infusions of cherry bark or roots and peppermint were said to have been drunk as tea, but such concoctions were considered usually more in the nature of medicines.

So long as the Gros Ventres had the buffalo, relatively little in the way of foodstuffs from the white man were imported. Sugar, flour, occasional fresh fruits, coffee and tea were known and used to some extent after about 1855.[10] The possibility of obtaining whiskey, was, however, one of the items which determined the popularity of a given trading place. Incidentally, tobacco was an important item of trade after 1800, although prior to that time the Gros Ventres had raised their own.[11]

Clothing and Adornment

The importance of the buffalo in the economy of the Gros Ventres was as obvious in clothing and in shelter as it was in food. The buffalo robe, dressed with the hair on, was perhaps the most valuable article inasmuch as it was not only a regular part of their garb, but also was the main article of trade with the whites after about 1830. When decorated, it had high prestige value as a gift.

Seldom was the hide of a buffalo older than two years used for robes since the fur of those of greater age was usually scabby even in the fall when the coats were in best condition. It required the skin of a yearling to make a robe for a twelve-year-old, and the skins of calves made robes for smaller children. When the demand of the trade for robes was very great, the large wool blanket sometimes replaced the robe for wearing apparel and for bedding.

Most of the other articles of clothing were made from well-dressed deer, elk and antelope skins.[12] Deer and elk were more

[10] See p. 22.

[11] This tradition is confirmed by Cocking in 1772, who writes, p. 111, "The tobacco they use is their own planting which hath disagreable flavor. I have preserved a specimen." Kroeber's informants denied knowledge of the tradition.

[12] In 1854 Denig, pp. 464–65, describes the cloth bought for clothing for summer and fall wear, but states that a real hunter must have a buffalo robe, moccasins, mittens, cap, skin leggings and an extra buffalo robe.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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CHAPTER IV

ECONOMIC ASPECTS

Labor

In the production of economic goods the man supplied the great bulk of raw materials by means of hunting, doing relatively little collecting and processing. He was responsible, however, for the supply and care of the major means of production, the horse. The chief objects manufactured by him were bows, arrows, clubs, shields, and ceremonial equipment.[1] The woman, on the other hand, supplied only a small part of the raw materials, through collecting, but did most of the processing of raw materials and manufacturing.

Cooperation within the household was necessary for production, and the household was practically a self-sufficient unit with relatively little reliance on the cooperative work of others. In actuality there was quite a bit of mutual help, especially among relatives. There was, of course, a certain amount of dependence of the man on his fellows in hunting in the sense that men usually hunted buffalo in groups and, in view of the common welfare, an individual was restrained from selfishly hunting alone and scattering the herd on which his fellows were depending. Nevertheless the operation was a collective rather than a truly cooperative one because, once the chase started, each man was on his own and had the right of disposal over whatever game he killed. It was stated that in any given run the most a man could kill would be seven or eight buffalo and that almost inevitably some would get none. No one went home empty-handed, however, for the more fortunate

[1] Maximilian noted in 1833 that men make only arms and smoking equipment (p. 103), and that among the Gros Ventres were many war clubs "made of the long end of an elk's horn" and "daggers" of jaws and teeth of a bear (p. 75). For other details of materials and manufacture, see Kroeber, 1908, pp. 150–51. For illustration of a shield, see photograph, courtesy of Richard Pohrt, pl. 3.

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224 476 [431] would share at least the meat, if not the hides, with the less fortunate, which latter would contribute by helping skin and butcher.

Butchering was quite an art and was considered the man's work, although occasionally women accompanied the hunting party if there were a shortage of men, as was liable to be the case especially in winter. Should the party have crossed a river to hunt, the meat was prepared for transportation on a raft by being cut into large chunks, and each two chunks skewered and joined by a thong of sufficient length to hang on the poles forming the raft. The raft was built by crossing two long poles at one end, the other ends [386] free and forming an angle of about thirty degrees. Three or four shorter poles were placed crosswise and lashed firmly in place with rawhide. The paunch of the buffalo, after being washed out, was used as a container for the many leftover bits of meat and was tied to the middle of the lower rung of the raft. A whole beef could thus be loaded on such a raft and towed across by one horseman. When, as was more usually the case, the meat was to be [492] packed back to camp by horses, the butchering was done differently but in such a way that a whole buffalo could be packed on a single [251] horse.[8] Sometimes in winter when a small party went out and they could not pack all the meat back in one trip, the remainder was buried in the snow and called for the following day.

462 281 Once the proceeds of the hunt were turned over to the households of the individual hunters, it was the woman's task to cook the food for immediate consumption and to prepare the surplus for storage. Her most arduous and time-consuming task was the dressing of skins and the manufacture of these into finished articles of clothing, containers, lodge-covers, and so on. It was stated that skins in one stage of preparation or another were nearly always at hand.[9] "They didn't do things in a haphazard way because there was a certain time to do this and a certain time to do that." From the hides of buffalo killed during the spring and early summer, when the hair was not thick, they made the parfleshes and bags, soles for moccasins, rawhide ropes, and lodge-covers. In the fall, when the hide was furry, robes were made.

The older women informants described how, when they were

[8] Cf. Kroeber, 1908, p. 149.

[9] For some details on skin dressing, see Kroeber, 1908, p. 150.

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The above case illustrates how it was possible for a man, in spite of a poor start in life, to rise. Children were instructed by their elders, as was Thick by his maternal uncle: "Above all things try to have horses. Try to have property and whatever you have, take care of it. By having lots of horses and property, people will respect you and look upon you as somebody." 556 867

Again Coming Daylight stated: "They used to think more of horses than of anything else. They were sure proud of owning a pinto pony. In telling stories when they wanted to describe the best they could think of they would say: 'You should have seen her horse—it was a big pinto pony.'" And in telling of a relative of hers, Woman Chief, Coming Daylight said: "Her husband was not very handsome, but they were well-to-do and she always rode top horses." 554 231

While all horses were as a rule well cared for, special attention was devoted to the buffalo horses. On the hunt, for instance, these horses would be led along unburdened by pack or rider to keep them fresh. They were ridden only for the actual chase and after the kill were turned loose to roll around and graze like young colts. When the butchering was completed the meat was packed on other horses and the swift buffalo horses were then led home again. These horses were ridden on social and ceremonial occasions, when their owners wished to show off, and of course the soldier societies were well mounted, but such use amounted to no more than a good work-out, and these valuable horses were never abused nor wilfully exhausted. 231

Children were exhorted to take care of their property, especially of horses, and the girls were advised that "a mare is worth everything—it increases—treat her well." It was stated that some attention was given to breeding. A man might judge that a colt showed possibilities of becoming a fast horse. If it fulfilled the early promise the colts it sired would be watched. The less likely of these would be castrated. Likewise, a good mare would, if possible, be retained by the owner for breeding. A man who owned a particularly good buffalo horse might, on his deathbed, either order that it be killed at his grave or give it to some relative he knew cared well for horses, with instructions never to abuse it nor give it away. [867] [763 768 431]

231 721 got scared and ran to the other side of the horse. Finally she took a big stick and threw it at the white thing and still it didn't move so she went closer and found it to be a Hudson's Bay blanket just soaking wet. The enemy must have used it when they crossed the river. So she dragged it home to her lodge. When she got there she called to her grandmother: 'Is he there?' Her grandmother said: 'He is.' She was still furious at her husband and called to him: 'Come out! I am giving you this,' and she said it in the way people speak when they are giving something on return from war. She was giving her husband his own buffalo horse! He however didn't say anything or make any exclamation. This so enraged her that she took the blanket and rolled it up as small as she could and threw it at him, hitting him on the chest saying: 'Here is another thing I brought you!' Then he laughed. But she had at least saved one of the most valuable horses.

[431] "The next morning the rest of the Gros Ventres in the party moved on, leaving this family behind. But fortunately some others came along and seeing their plight gave them horses, for example, Pemmican gave one to Coming Daylight, Little Shields gave her uncle one, and Sleeping Bear gave her husband one."

231 436 The importance of various transactions could be gauged by whether or not a horse were included, other things such as fancy clothing, ornaments, guns, etc. being mentioned as "thrown in."

[554] A person who gave a horse in whatever connection accrued prestige for himself and at the same time showed in what esteem the donor held the recipient.

[583] Horses were generally included in the bride price; in inaugurating the more serious type of enemy-friendship; in payment for services of the medicine man in curing certain types of illness, and in payment to the ceremonial grandfather as well as in payment to the namer or ear-piercer of a child; in settling disputes; in gambling; in gifts to others in honor of relatives, and in meeting certain other kinship obligations.

231 556 Horses could be acquired by a man through raiding the enemy; by gift from relatives and from non-relatives in honor of someone else or in instituting the enemy-friendship; in the bride price of a sister, daughter, or maternal niece; in payment for services rendered; in gambling; through inheritance; in trading with the whites. A woman might share in the bride price of her brother's

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daughter, and might receive gifts from relatives, but would otherwise have few opportunities of obtaining horses. 231 556

In former times the rules regarding inheritance were fairly simple. If a man died, his relatives took the more valuable livestock, while anyone was free to come into the lodge and take any other personal property of the deceased which was not to be buried with him. The man's relatives would not, however, take the horses which belonged to his wife or wives, or which had been given before his death to his children. When a woman died she usually would have little valuable property in any case, but, again, any other woman might rush in and strip the lodge of whatever personal property might be therein, including food. The close family of the deceased were "so grief-stricken that they wouldn't notice who takes what," and "a husband would never keep anything of his wife's." It was said, too, that "women were braver than men in disposing of their property before death, and often gave gifts of personal property to those they wished to have them." 428 768 [431]

In objects derived from the white man, the value put upon them was mainly utilitarian. For example, in matching wagers on one occasion a man put up a gold watch. There was no one on the other side who had a watch to offer, but a spy-glass was considered the equivalent. It was explained that the value of the watch in dollars—whether it had a fine gold case or not—would not be taken into consideration. The question in matching was to find things of equal value to the Indian in his way of life. To illustrate this The Boy told of a gift to his father, Lame Bull, from a white trader on the Saskatchewan, of a hobble which locked. "Perhaps this didn't have a high value in dollars, but it was considered extremely valuable by Lame Bull because it saved him many a race horse. Even though the enemy might sneak a horse out of camp, being unable to unfasten the hobble, he would have to abandon the valuable horse before getting very far away." 177 435

On the other hand, while utility was certainly an important consideration in the Gros Ventres' evaluation of goods produced by themselves, various other elements were taken into account. A horse procured from the enemy was perhaps the most valuable of all things to the Gros Ventres; aside from other considerations, a man would have risked his life to obtain it and that in itself lent 435 554 231

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value. Thus any object captured from the enemy, no matter how trivial it might be, was more valuable than a duplicate of that same thing obtained in any other way, and could be used to initiate an enemy-friendship, one of the most important of Gros Ventre transactions. A man who gave a horse, rather than or in addition to other items—to establish the enemy-friendship, to pay for the curing of a relative, to someone in honor of his relative, to his ceremonial grandfather for guiding him through the Sacred Dance, to wager in gambling, to show how much he thought of his brother-in-law in return for so simple a gift as the flesh of a puppy—would gain in prestige, for he thus established for himself a reputation for "being somebody."

The amount of labor that went into the making of an object, such as the polished deer-hoof trimming on a robe, was an element in its value. When the robe was old and worn the recipient thereof would remove the fringe and return to the donor "so she could use them again." Scarcity, too, entered into evaluation of goods. Eagle feathers were, for instance, more valuable than other kinds of feathers. Again, as to elk teeth, it was explained: "The elk has only two teeth that are like ivory,[11] and so it takes a long time to accumulate them. They are to us Gros Ventres like pearls are to the whites. They were our greatest decoration. They are valuable even today, and, while imitations are sometimes used, you can always tell the difference."

Exchange and Distribution

There was actually no need for economic exchange within the tribe, with the object of obtaining the necessities of life, but a need had developed for exchange with the fur traders to obtain guns, whiskey, metal objects—kettles, scraper-blades, etc.—cloth, tobacco, beads, paints, and so on. After about 1830, the medium of exchange with traders was the buffalo robe, which rapidly increased in value at the expense of beaver.[12] Traders on the Missouri accepted other items produced by the Indians, but everything was equated in terms of robes.[13]

[11] These are the rudimentary canines. Cf. Seton, v. 3, p. 5.

[12] Bradley, pp. 203–04.

[13] According to Denig, p. 421, an Assiniboine chief on Jan. 8, 1852, was

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439 wives had vowed to cover a Pipe, undoubtedly he would try to include in his purchases the requisite length of black cloth. Individuals of course differed. In view of their labor, the wives would expect to share in the return therefor which the husband was able to secure from the trader, but this expectation was not always met.[17]

The items thus obtained were consumed by the Gros Ventres in the same ways as those goods of their own manufacture—some being directly consumed, some entering into further production, and some being exchanged on the principle of gifts and of payments for services, and in gambling.

554 A man would accumulate a surplus only to expend it as
431 generously as possible in order to attain prestige. The person with
439 a reputation for generosity rose in public esteem, and was in turn the recipient of many gifts, whereas the man with only one horse and only one wife could not afford to meet the demands for hospitality and for generosity in other transactions, and thus could not profit by the system of indirect and deferred exchange.

262 Sharing of food was an important element in attaining prestige
574 through generosity. A person known to be stingy with food would
554 lack status. The ideal was often preached to children embodied in
867 such statements as the following: "If you have visitors, even though you don't have much food, give the last of it to them."

574 Should a male visitor drop in unexpectedly, the first thing a man did was to tell his wife to cook and she was expected to comply. How seriously this was regarded may be seen from the following case told by Singer: "One time my husband, Iron Bucket, went with a friend to visit the latter's brother. The sister-in-law was naturally a stingy woman and made no move to feed them. Her husband was sitting there fixing arrows and he told her: 'Hurry and cook. If you have nothing, ask for meat at one of the lodges.' This woman had a big shaggy head and sat there with her head bowed and her husband couldn't make her move. After a while, however, some meat was brought in from hunting, and this woman went out, got it and threw it down hard inside her lodge. She was mad. And instead of giving them in a nice way the manifolds and liver that they ordinarily eat first, she slung

[17] For a case in point, see p. 178.

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574 your arm because they always get after me if I feed any one.' So as I was going along the other two wives were coming back with the wood and saw me. They asked this third wife what I had wanted and she said: 'She came here to beg.' They asked her: 'Did you feed her?' and when she said no, the other two scolded her saying: 'You should have fed her at least a little bit' and continued to bawl her out for being so stingy."

While not all individuals lived up to the standard of casual hospitality, the majority seemingly did so, and business negotiations were usually transacted while visiting.[18] The individual who [554] dispensed food liberally could expect a return from others, although not necessarily the ones whom he had fed. Furthermore, if a man wished to sustain a good reputation he was expected to entertain well. It was customary, therefore, when fresh meat had been brought in for a man to tell his wife to cook and then he called out: "So-and-so, come and smoke," to as many as he wished to [554] invite. When the guests arrived he greeted each and assigned him to a place in the lodge, the most honored guests being seated in the back opposite the opening. After the guests had eaten, the host filled the pipe from a plentiful supply of "mixture," and the smok- [276] ing continued until the host gave the sign for dispersal by knocking the ashes from the pipe.

553 574 On more formal occasions, such as a naming feast, the host would ask some older man with a strong voice to act as announcer, and in such case the latter would call out by name each guest and say who was inviting him. Ordinarily a man would invite his own age group, his close friends, but it was not customary for the wives of the guests to come. If a woman wished to invite others, she would go to the various lodges and invite them personally. In this type of planned hospitality there was more in the nature of direct exchange although it might be considerably deferred.

574 431 In addition to hospitality, ostentatious liberality accomplished circulation of goods within the tribe. From the Gros Ventre point of view: "Presents were usually given with the intention of doing good and if no return were made, nothing was said or done. But often it turned out that at some later time the recipient would say

[18] Cf. Denig, pp. 514–15.

574
to himself: 'He gave to me, so I'll give to him.' But no one was 431
in duty bound to give the equivalent in return."

Within the network of kinship obligations, exchange was more 602
often indirect than reciprocal. A man could expect help from his 431
father and from his mother's brother without being under obligation to return goods in like amount—he was supposed to repay them by conducting himself in such a way that they could be proud of him. This meant that the man in his turn would be especially generous toward his sister and her children, that he would adequately fulfill his duties toward his wife's people and provide goods in sufficient amount that his wife could fulfill her own obligations especially those toward her own brother's wife and children.

When others saw fit to honor an individual, say for bravery in 554
warfare, that person was supposed to give away goods in large 431
amounts to show that he appreciated the honor; and his relatives would join with him in giving, thereby increasing his, as well as their own, prestige. Likewise in paying for services, such as those [602]
of a medicine man, relatives would "chip in" to the best of their ability, the one assuming the largest part of the burden receiving the greatest boost in public esteem. A person who impoverished himself by giving generously at such times would be sure that, with his reputation thus established, he would soon be the recipient of gifts dispensed by others in like liberality. Meantime, however, he could not afford to sit back awaiting the presents from others. He would soon lose his coveted reputation and be referred to as [461]
lazy, an epithet strong enough to bring tears to the eyes of a man who entertained any ambitions whatsoever.

If a person were in need, it was possible for him to request 426
what was necessary, preferably from some relative who was well- 558
to-do, and usually his request would be met. But a continual borrower lost status and a limit was thus put upon indiscriminate "begging." One woman stated: "If your sister asked you for something you would not refuse her, but it was to your brother's wife you would give things voluntarily. A woman had great pride in keeping her brother's wife well-dressed, and if you had an [607]
extra supply of dried berries she is the one you would think of first."

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres 431

Thus we have the basis for the generalizations the Gros Ventres
183 make about their own culture. The principle seemed to be that
431 the more one gives, the more he gets. Coming Daylight explained:
" Those who are stingy don't come up, they just go back, back, back. Those who are generous gets lots of things. My maternal uncle was very generous and I try to follow his example. I feed everybody—old men, children and everybody—and people give me lots of things. Stingy people would eat all by themselves and nobody would give things to anyone like that."

The attitude is further illustrated by the following statement by Singer in explaining that the one selected as Feather Pipe Keeper had to give up everything he owned and would be sitting naked and bereft of all property: " Then his relatives and friends bring him things to live on. It is a great thing to give to someone like that. But these people kind of share everything and it holds back the ones that are prosperous. Our belief was that in a little while the ones who give have everything again. This didn't mean that a person could be lazy since it was ' thrown up ' to anyone if he sat around and didn't work."

183 Again, according to Coming Daylight, " Formerly they all
431 seemed to work in a bunch and work hard for a living. It seemed
476 like they were all one, and always helped one another and treated one another to things, especially to something they thought the other person didn't have. If a bunch of women went out to pick berries, they helped one another with pounding. If they had hides to tan, others seeing the work going on came and helped and in no time the work was done. Even if they dug turnips, which are hard to get, should they have brought in a lot, they passed them around. If someone had no horse to use in hunting, someone loaned him one."

Mary Ereaux mentioned: " The Gros Ventres are great ones for sharing and that keeps the more industrious ones down. They are not as present as generous as they used to be because they would be entirely out. But even today if a woman brings you some berries, later on you give her some sugar or something she needs. That is the way they always lived and still do."

In payment for services there is no set " price," so to speak, but there was a gradation according to the kind of service rendered. If an older experienced woman were called in to design a new

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lodge cover, the hostess provided food and there was no other direct remuneration. If one sought knowledge as to how to use an ordinary medicinal root, something was given in exchange, but in a relatively small amount. On the other hand in compensation for the services of a medicine man, not only was food prepared, but in addition a much greater amount of property was given to the doctor, who in turn would see that those who had accompanied him to help in singing at the cure, would receive some goods as well. The amount offered to the doctor by the one paying for the services was governed by the reputation of the medicine man as well as by the individual's regard for his own reputation for generosity. People would say: "Look how much so-and-so thinks of his relative who was sick—he gave so much to the one who cured him." If the patient were very ill a whole family might really impoverish itself in paying doctors, were it necessary to call in one specialist after another, as sometimes happened.

Although apparently there was a tendency to call on relatives to perform services—such as naming a child, telling a war story at the erection of a new lodge, and so on—remuneration was forthcoming, although perhaps on not so large a scale as if a non-relative were called on to perform the same offices.

In addition to exchange of goods effected through generous hospitality and the prestige-requirements of ostentatious liberality, including payment for services, the distribution of goods within the tribe was aided by gambling. Wagers were matched by two competing individuals and bet on an all-or-nothing basis. Considerable amounts of property changed hands at a single match.[19]

[19] For a discussion of gambling among the Gros Ventres, see Flannery and Cooper, 1946.

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case of necessity pay the indemnity. Other people might say to a man that it was of no use to help that nephew, that he was no good. Yet the uncle did not give up trying to save face for the nephew, and to do his best to shield or rehabilitate him—but at the same time he "talked turkey to him."

Even after a man was married, his maternal uncle had the right of disciplining him. If a husband mistreated his wife undeservedly it was said that his maternal uncle could step in and take the wife temporarily away from his nephew, letting him shift for himself, doing his own cooking and so on, "until he came to his senses." A man would have to take such treatment from his uncle, it was said, because public opinion condemned the husband and backed up the uncle, who was considered within his rights.

Furthermore the maternal uncle would feel duty-bound to protect his nephew from danger. An extreme case was cited in illustration. "A Gros Ventre boy was captured by the Crow when fairly young and he remained among them after he grew up although he could have returned. On one occasion the Gros Ventres surrounded a war party of Crow among whom was this young Gros Ventre man. The young man appealed to his mother's brother to save his life, and the uncle responded by using every argument he could think of. The other Gros Ventres in the party refused the plea, however, on the grounds that the boy had previously had the opportunity to return to his own people, and asked: 'Why didn't he think of his uncle then?'"

On the other side of the picture, if a young man were successful and "on the way up," as the saying goes, his maternal uncle had priority over the boy's father or older brother in helping him by giving generously to him in private and by giving away publicly in his honor as lavishly as possible. It was stated, for instance, that if a young man was ready to go to war, his uncle might go to him and give him a horse, encouraging him to face the enemy bravely and to show courage under fire. He would tell his nephew: "I'm going to watch you. Here is your chance to show what you can do." Thus he might "steal the show" from a father or older brother who themselves might have intended to help the boy off to a good start. Because it was the uncle who did this, nothing would be said. All his relatives would be proud of a successful young

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607 A woman was, however, expected to be especially generous to her brother's wife. Coming Daylight gave, as example, her own experience at the time of her first marriage. "One day, shortly after I had arrived at my husband's home, his sister, Watches All, brought me a couple of skins saying: 'Now you take the flesh off these hides. You are known to do a good job, and since my eyesight is poor I might cut the skin.' So I did what was asked, never dreaming that one of these skins was to be a robe for me. Some time later Watches All invited me and another young woman who was married to my husband's cousin, to a lodge. When I arrived I found the lodge full of old women. I was told to go around to the place of honor in the rear, where two robes were placed. When the other young woman arrived, they told her to take her place beside me. We were both to sit beside the robes and not to rise until they were all through. Watches All had invited, among the others, the woman who had 'initiated' her and who acted as a sort of teacher. Watches All said to this woman: 'You are going to initiate my sister-in-law with this robe.' So they made a smudge and Watches All held one side of the robe and the woman held the other, as they stood behind me. Then they held the robe toward the fire three times, making the motion as though to put it about my shoulders, and on the fourth time they actually put it around me, tying it at the breast and telling me not to hold it on with my hands. Each of the four times the motion was made, the woman blew on the robe spraying it with a powdered root which she had in her mouth. Then they went through the same procedure for the other bride. Finally, we were told to walk out without picking up our old robes, which we had left by the door when we entered, and which were to be given to two of the oldest women present. The new robes were beautiful. They were embroidered with porcupine quills, fringed with deer-hoofs, and sprinkled with mica, which glittered in the firelight as we moved. It was certainly fine to have such a beautiful new robe; and right away, my husband gave his sister a horse because she had been so good to me. Later on, I made her some moccasins."

607 431 [292]

In addition to the special honor a woman might show her brother's wife by a ceremony such as described above, she would in general take pride in keeping her well-dressed. For instance Mary

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explained: "Mrs. Curly Head was the best-dressed woman I knew. Her husband's sister kept her well-dressed. A woman has a lot of pride in the appearance of her brother's wife, and the old women tell us that it was the same in the old days." Cora corroborated this by stating: "My sister and I would load my brother's wife with presents. And if he had more than one wife, it would be the same,—a woman is good to her brother's wife no matter how many times he might be married." Coming Daylight mentioned that she made it a point to bring her cousin's wife—she had no blood brother—especially nice gifts whenever she made a trip and added that in former times, just as today, when a woman distributed berries she had picked, the first one she would think of would be either her brother's wife or her son's wife.

About all that a woman did for her husband's sister was to make her occasional gifts of moccasins. The giving of moccasins, however, had a significance far beyond what their extrinsic value suggests. Mary illustrated this by the following incident: "Flat Head is my cousin. He has three half-brothers, all of them having the same father but different mothers. I treat these three in the same way I treat Flat Head, namely, as a brother. One of these men died last spring, and his wife, who is of course my sister-in-law, came and brought me a pair of moccasins. So when she was leaving I gave her a woolen shawl which I had just bought, and a dress which I had made and intended to display in the bazaar. My husband's niece, who is young and doesn't understand the old ways, said reproachfully to me: 'Why, Aunt Mary, you gave up that nice shawl you wanted so badly.' So I told her: 'Surely—I couldn't let my sister-in-law go out of here without giving her something! You should know that when anyone gives you a pair of moccasins it is a big thing. It is as much as anything I can think of—as much as a bottle of whiskey or of brandy!'"

Grandparents

The relationship between grandparents and grandchildren was a free-and-easy one, unmarked by the reticence which characterized the parent-child relationship, or by the feeling of restraint which obtains between so many relatives of opposite sex. "A grandfather can say anything he likes to his granddaughter, and vice

603 versa. Grandparents, for instance, can tell folk-tales and stories, the subject-matter and details of which no parents would mention in the hearing of their children." A woman would think nothing of teasing her grandmother about men. The following is typical of the milder sort of joking which is customary, but which would be considered highly improper toward parents. "Coming Daylight's granddaughter came into her house to borrow a knife. The old woman told her: 'Don't lose that knife. I have had it for a long time and I love that knife.' Whereupon the granddaughter replied: 'Yes, you love that knife just like you love your sweethearts!' and the several women present had a good laugh over this joke." Again, Coming Daylight herself told of an old man who was grandfather to her maternal uncle and thus also her "grandfather." She said: "One day when I was still a young woman, this old man asked me why I didn't come to him to obtain [831] medicine power from him. I replied: 'Oh, I wouldn't come to you because I know that you are one of those medicine men who includes sexual intercourse as payment, and if I came to you, you would try to have me too!' Of course I could never have said that to anyone in my parents' generation."

Grandparents are said to have been indulgent toward their [868] grandchildren. They might occasionally give advice, and indeed it was expected that a grandmother would train her granddaughter not only in skills and techniques, but also prepare her for what to expect on the physical side of marriage, warn her not to arouse her husband's jealousy, etc. When in trouble, however, a grandchild could discuss any matter with his grandparents. They would give counsel, but never scold. A man would usually not count on material aid from his grandparents, but, on the other hand, he was not expected to contribute to their support to any greater degree [431] than he would to that of any old persons were they in need—namely, by giving an occasional present of food or clothing.

Siblings of the Same Sex

593 The relationship between brothers on the one hand and between sisters on the other was a more or less casual one. Family loyalty and ordinary generosity were expected, but formality was lacking. "A girl and her sisters could, of course, laugh and joke and tease

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Names may be bestowed on account of dreams. Coming Daylight named one of her grandchildren that way. "She dreamed that there was a big gathering and that she was looking for this little grandson. In reality of course he was an infant, but in the dream he was three or four years old. There was an old man, a very old man, dressed all in white, who said to her: 'Why, there goes "White Skunk" up that way.' As she looked she saw her grandson running in the distance and he seemed to be now a tall young man. Upon waking, she told her dream to her daughter. The daughter in turn told her husband: 'My mother had a dream and "White Skunk" is what the old man called him.' The husband said: 'Fine. We will call him that. Now he will reach old age.'"

If the name is from a dream, the person tells the dream at the time of the naming. This is the way Singer was named by Old Man Sitting High. Occasionally a person might volunteer to name a child on account of a dream, although not always because he had dreamed of a name. "Before one of Cora's children was born, Stiff Arm came to her and told her he had had a bad dream about her. He said: 'In order to prevent my bad dream coming true, I will name the child.' Cora was scared because he was a medicine man. So she had to have a big feast and invite lots of people and give Stiff Arm a horse. There was the formal ceremony. Stiff Arm had given Cora and her husband the choice of three names, derived from his medicine powers: 'White Eagle,' 'Rides Down Hill,' and 'Sailing Eagle.' They chose the last, but the boy was sickly and they had a hard time rearing him. Her relatives thought she should change his name, but she never bothered to do so. He is a young man now."

It was customary that "when a child gets sick through the given name," the name be changed. The Skinners, for instance, hired Stiff Arm to name their boy. He called him "White Eagle" but he was sickly, so his grandmother, Ghost Calf, and Coming Daylight were the ones that changed his name to that of his grandfather, "Big Man." Ghost Calf told the boy's father to give away two dollars at the dance when she announced the new name. It was stated that in any case the namer should be a healthy person.

Old folks sometimes gave away their own names to children, as in the case of a man nicknamed Iron Bucket, whose grand-

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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553 father had given him his own name, "Bear Teeth"; and in that of Ragged Robe's wife who gave her name to a little girl. In this latter case, at least, the woman continued using her own name.

Except in those cases where the name of a relative is given, as is seemingly the rule nowadays, the name must have some specific relation to either the war deeds or the medicine powers of the namer. Singer remarked that one time, when she had been very lucky in locating some weapons abandoned by the enemy, she was looking forward very much to naming a little relative "Finder" in connection with this exploit. Unfortunately, however, the child's father had already had a name for her so Singer was disappointed. A Pipe-Keeper, too, might name a child from something connected with the Pipe. Rufus Warrior, for instance, was named from the rawhide with which the Flat Pipe is wrapped; another child was called "Red Woman" from the fact that the wife of the Flat Pipe Keeper was always painted red,—even her hair. Al Chandler knows of two people his grandfather had named from objects in the Feather Pipe bundle.

The more formal the occasion, the more expensive the naming was for the family involved. If, for instance, advantage was taken of a public ceremony, not only was the one who gave the name recompensed by a valuable gift, such as a horse, but many other gifts would be given to various persons in the audience in order to honor the recipient of the name and to give prestige to his family. The expense was particularly heavy when a name was publicly bestowed upon an adult in recognition of bravery at war.[11]

431 727 554

551 Nearly everyone had a nickname. One of the most common was, and is, simply "Girl" or "Boy." Such a nickname often was acquired in early childhood because the name which had been bestowed was not liked,—and those names given through medicine often fell in that category. Coming Daylight said that she had not cared for the name given by a medicine man to her first-born son, so she had called him "Boy." The child died very young, and she now wonders if he would have lived longer had they used his real name. Nicknames may be acquired at any time of life and sometimes they are far from complimentary, especially those bestowed later in life by enemy-friends. If the nickname "takes" there is

[11] Cf. Chapter 5, p. 101.

2: Flannery E-5 (1940-1948) 1953
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787 made up my mind that I did not want such power, the immediate reason for my refusal being that I had seen doctors who swallowed what they had sucked from the weak spot in patients whom they cured, and I just couldn't bring myself to have to do likewise."

857 562 Although boys had much more freedom than had girls, they too were assigned tasks at a fairly early age. One of the responsibilities of boys was to water the horses during the day. At about the age of fourteen, however, a boy would be required to take the horses out to graze immediately after taking his morning plunge. He would be gone perhaps three or four hours and would eat only after he returned.

857 868 852 The play of younger boys with bow and arrow was training for later life. The older boys accompanied the men on hunting parties and by the time they were about 18 most were skilled hunters. Some families, it was said, took advantage of the fact that a boy would have killed his first big game,—antelope, deer, buffalo, [431] —by making a feast at which this game was served. On such an occasion the boy stood at the center and gave away property, such as horses and blankets provided by his father or uncle, in [421] order to mark the event. This was considered training for the way he should behave in later life in regard to his own property.

857 868 [533] [777] Boys were trained in trapping as well as hunting. There were certain songs which were sung by grandparents as the boys danced around in the lodge both before and after trapping. These songs were supposed to bring luck in finding game.

Sometimes when older boys were out taking care of horses, they would band together, daub their faces and bodies with mud as "war paint," and make a "raid" on the camp in order to steal meat which was drying on racks. The women who had worked so hard to prepare the meat got angry and sometimes fought the boys with sticks. Usually, the boys were successful, and would then cook the meat and have a wonderful feast,[1] far outside the camp circle.

[554] Men encouraged their sons to be brave, and a boy would be anxious to go along on a real raiding party just as soon as possible because a young man had no standing until he had risked his life. An adolescent boy who accompanied a war party had to be a man

[1] This type of raiding is also described by Kroeber, 1908, p. 182.

It was thought well, too, to name a child after someone who had attained advanced age. Thus it was that youths of 16 or 17 years of age would go out in a storm and stand before the lodge of some old man or woman and cry, begging the prayers of that person. Again, on a hunting party, should there be some old man along, unable to hunt, one member of the group might give a whole buffalo carcass to him; whereupon the grateful elder would offer a spontaneous prayer on the donor's behalf. Similarly, it was not at all unusual for successful young hunters to seek out old people to share in some of the spoils,—just as in these later times a bottle of whiskey was occasionally given to old persons by the young. Once in a while, too, some married man would have his wife cook a quantity of food and publicly invite old people, one of whom, in appreciation of this attention, would offer the expected prayer for the long life, health and success of the host and all the members of his household.

Dignity was, however, not necessarily an attribute of old age. With advancing years the conventions were somewhat relaxed. It was stated by one informant: "When a man had lived long enough to have participated in all the Sacred Dances, he had acquired the right to do almost as he pleased, including not having to observe so strictly the relationship taboos. It seemed to throw the bars down and he could have even more fun than ever at the expense of his enemy-friends and become still more vulgar and obscene." Relations between old women living together were not always harmonious and noisy quarreling was not unusual. Sometimes young boys played pranks on such old women, as in the following case.

"Two old women who were sisters shared a lodge. One day they were in there, seated back to back, warming themselves by the fire. They didn't have any clothes on and were feeling good, scratching their skins with sticks. Two young boys peeped in. They took a long willow and quietly heated the end of it in the fire. When the end of the willow was glowing, they touched one of the old women with it. She yelled at the other: 'You burned me,' and of course the other denied it. After a little while, the boys did the same thing to the other old woman. They heard her call out: 'What did you do to me? You burned me!' The boys

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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second day; our field information is not clear) the Flat Pipe which had been kept only loosely covered most of the time since the first night was ritually wrapped up in its bundle and the new keeper was told to observe carefully so he would know how the re-wrapping was done. 793 796*

Meanwhile a regulation Flat Pipe sweat-lodge was put up, outside the camp circle as always and near the new keeper's lodge, for the new keeper and ex-keepers to sweat. In this sweat the women co-keepers did not join. The first after the Supreme Being (and other supernatural beings?) in the list of invitees to sweat was the new keeper, after him the ex-keepers. After all had taken their places inside the sweat-lodge, the retiring co-keeper carried the Flat Pipe, wrapped in its bundle, walking clockwise if necessary around the sweat-lodge, to the door thereof as the last. She entered by the east door, deposited the bundle in the place of honor at the west, and went out through the small west door. When it was time to take the Pipe out, she, accompanied by the new co-keeper, came to the west door, reached in and grasped the Pipe bundle, at once handed over the bundle to the new co-keeper and escorted her to the latter's lodge.

Then the new keeper and the ex-keepers sweated. When through, they put on their clothes and scattered to their lodges, the new keeper going back to his own, a new one which the retiring keeper and his relatives provided for him if his old one had been lost in the first night's raid. For every pin put in to hold the new lodge down he had to make a gift to the retiring keeper and the latter's relatives. So too even when they tied the door and showed the new keeper and his wife how to start their fire, make their bed, mount a horse, and so forth. [431]

So ended the transfer rite proper. The new keeper and co-keeper were now consecrated, and had to live by the keepership code, no matter how they had previously lived.

So ended, too, the preliminary instruction. But further instruction was given from time to time later. When the new keeper, with the help of his relatives, would gather together sufficient property, he would seek further instruction from the Flat Pipe ex-keepers especially the last keeper or some particularly well-

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793 natural world and as beneficent helpers of their people, and the lofty ethical behavior and magnanimity demanded by the Gros Ventres' code in individuals of prominence in secular as well as in sacred activities, the Flat Pipe keeper and co-keeper were expected in general to live lives strictly conformed to the Gros
793 Ventre ethical code and in particular to be generous and to repress
431 aggressive impulses. The people would ordinarily be generous to them. For instance, after a successful buffalo hunt the killer or killers would share the spoils with them. But they themselves were under special obligations of generosity. If, for example, a person came to the keeper's lodge and, observing the rule above mentioned of going all the way inside, asked the keeper for something, the latter had to comply with the request and could not refuse it, and in actuality hardly ever refused. If the keeper lacked what was requested, he had to give the petitioner something else, for the latter would not be sent away empty-handed. This custom did not, it seems, lead to abuse and the keeper was not imposed upon. The keeper and his wife were required to be especially generous in providing feasts from time to time and in giving food to callers. Whenever any one came to the keeper's lodge to make an offering to the Pipe, the donor was fed.

793 When a man became keeper all grudges held by or toward him and the co-keeper were wiped away. They could no longer make
785 their enemies the target of abuse or revenge, and vice versa.

As mentioned above, to command respect they could use the powers previously described, although at the risk of ensuing penalties. But for the rest, they were strictly forbidden to lose their tempers with, or show anger toward, anyone and particularly to strike anyone. If they wished evil on anyone, the evil would come to pass. If in a fit of anger they forgot themselves and hit or whipped a person, or even a dog or horse, the victim would be paralyzed. Nor could they talk badly about people.

The keepership imposed many major and minor hardships, austerities, privations and inconveniences upon the keeper and co-keeper. These had not, so far as we can judge, an ascetic purpose proper, that is, spiritual or moral self-control and achievement through self-denial. They did however serve, not only to set apart the keeper and co-keeper from the rest of the tribe but

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276 would use tobacco in his prayers for the patient. If the patient survived but was still weak, the keeper made him smoke to get back his strength. So some of the other tribesmen learned to smoke. Gradually social (and recreative) smoking took its place together with ceremonial smoking.

In earlier times, the women never smoked either ritually or socially. Even in rites where they had an important role, such as [562] the inauguration of a new pipe keeper, they did not smoke, as women were considered secondary, not equal to men. Even as late as The Boy's and Thick's early boyhood in the decade before the last buffalo disappeared (1884), only the old women smoked, never the young girls. The spread of the custom among these old women was probably due to their discovery by experience that the smoking prescribed for maladies, such as, chronic headache, was good for the body. But even today, although women smoke non-ritually when alone or among themselves, they are not allowed to smoke at a Pipe rite, and, if wives are present when a man invites a group of men for a social visit or meal and he fills up his pipe to give his guests a smoke, he does not offer the pipe to the wives.

Tobacco was used only in pipe smoking. It was sometimes smoked straight by old men and old women, and by the sick as [171 824] a cure. But ordinarily the Gros Ventres smoked it mixed either with red willow, as did the Cree and Assiniboine, or preferably, and in the Flat Pipe rites always, with larb.

Larb is "a ground plant that grows on hills and mountains." We could get no specimen for identification. After the tobacco and larb were mixed, a little more larb than tobacco, fat was worked into the mixture to season it. On taking leave from his Gros Ventre [431 609] friends in 1940 the present author was given a small bag of this mixture as a token of peace and good will and found the mixture a very pleasant aromatic smoke.

278 The wild parsley, associated with the Flat and Feathered Pipe and with the Crazy Lodge, was used as a powerful poison. It was greatly feared and was spoken of in undertones. Its preparation is a lost art. The whole plant was and is considered poisonous, but poison was prepared principally from the root, which was first

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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buffalo chips she had brought back, and sat down. They then heard a "terrible groan" from the room where the Pipe was kept. Horse Capture and his wife seemed surprised and did not know what to make of it. The groan sounded to Coming Daylight more as if it said "Yes." After this all sat down to dinner. Afterwards Horse Capture's wife gave Coming Daylight a big buggy-parasol, a very expensive present. "They never say: 'I give you this for that,' but any little thing you do for the Pipe, like picking mint for it, the co-keeper would give you something for it."

When a number of "coverings" would accumulate on the Pipe bundle they would be hung elsewhere in the keeper's lodge, and from time to time the "coverings" would have to be ritually disposed of by the keeper with the full sweat-lodge rite. The keeper would detail a couple of young men to help him prepare the "coverings" and to make the sweat-lodge. The "coverings" might be tied to the sweat-lodge pole, as in the seasonal rite, or might just be brought as such by the co-keeper or an attendant to the sweat-lodge. Here, in the latter case, before the sweating proper began, they were brought in clockwise and given to the keeper. He would dip his right hand in the black charcoal paint, and touch each covering three times in three different places. Then he would gather up all the coverings, lift them up over the ascending smudge, lower them in three stages, move them around in three clockwise circles, and hand the whole bunch to the first man on his left, from whom it was successively passed till it reached the door. Here attendant two took the bunch of coverings and deposited it on the top of the mound in front of the sweat-lodge.

The coverings were finally taken by one of the attendants way out on the hills or elsewhere, as was done with other offerings. Or else the keeper could call together the orphans and other poorer children and distribute the coverings to them, for it was believed that being good to children, especially needy and orphaned ones, was pleasing to the Supreme Being. Coming Daylight's uncle, Crow Bull, when keeper of the Flat Pipe, used to distribute the coverings to the very poor and needy old folks. If among the coverings there was tobacco, this was not deposited out on the hills but was given to the old people. The buffalo

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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ance with given practice it must have been carried away on a hill or elsewhere.[1] 782

[1] In 1948 The Boy gave a detailed description of the rite should the killer of an albino or "beaver" buffalo present the skin to the Pipe, rather than offer it as a sacrifice. He said that in this case, the man presented the green hide to the Pipe with a ritual directed by the keeper and included the painting of the donor. The keeper then called in two young women known to be expert tanners, received them ritually, and instructed them in procedures to be followed in tanning this particular hide. He made a crown, bracelets and anklets of twisted sage for each woman while singing a special song (not recorded by Cooper). When the hide was dressed there was a big feast at the keeper's lodge at which the keeper ritually painted the skin red. The keeper gave the donor of the skin the choice of any horse from all except one of his herd; to each of the women tanners he gave three valuable presents. [R.F.] [281] 301] [431]

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
NQ13 Gros Ventre NQ13

793 preme Being through Bha'a, the Supreme Being is the father of the Pipe.'"

In the cases where the new keeper was elected in secret conclave and not told or asked beforehand, at night after the camp was asleep a group sneaked up to the electee's lodge, and one of the group carrying the feathered stick from the Pipe bundle entered the lodge. If the electee tried to escape, the watchers outside would grab and hold him. The electee was raided and lost everything, his lodge and horses and other belongings,—just as the man to whom the Pipe had first been given from above lost everything. Afterwards, however, the relatives and friends of the electee, anybody that could, would give a new lodge, new bedding and other lodge equipment, and horses,—as was done to the first owner and keeper.

After being grabbed, the new keeper and his wife were carried —they did not walk—to the lodge of the retiring keeper who put a cloth over their heads. They were thus in the dark and didn't know what was going on until a special song was sung and the cloth removed. We were unable to secure many details of the transfer rite. The rite included, of course, ritual and other instruction of the new keeper, and co-keeper for which he had to pay handsomely,—for instance, a horse for a ritual song taught him. For [431] these payments he had to count on his relatives and friends who, later in the course of his keepership, would receive equivalent presents in return. A central feature of the transfer rite was the new keeper's dance with the Pipe. In earlier times, in fact up to about 1905, it was only the keeper, we were informed, who could dance with the Pipe and this only at the transfer rite.

346 Apparently the lodge of the Feathered Pipe keeper was very
383 like that of the Flat Pipe keeper, and under similar respect taboos, but we were able to obtain only fragmentary specific information.

[784] At the back of the lodge, in the place of honor opposite the door, was the Pipe bed of sage brush, laid down with the tip ends pointed toward the lodge center, and covered with a white buffalo robe. When the group was camping at the same site for any length of time, in good weather the Pipe bundle was hung up during the daytime over the lodge door.

346 All movement within the lodge was clockwise. There could be
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rate it was apparently a well-known song, as Singer also, who knew some of the Sacrifice Dance songs, knew it and spoke of it. D96* [533]

Besides the sacrifice offerings, previously mentioned, of the trimmed pieces of flesh, and the self-torture looked upon itself as a sort of "sacrifice," other offerings of clothing, dry goods and so forth were made at the Sacrifice Dance. These offerings were made, Coming Daylight stated, "to ask the Supreme Being to give them a long happy life," and both she and Singer on another occasion affirmed that the "sacrifice" in the Sacrifice Dance was offered to the Supreme Being.

Further, apart from the gifts made by vowers to their ritual grandfathers for the skin piercing and to the Flat Pipe keeper by the principal vower, presents were commonly given away by relatives of the self-torturers to third parties,—old people, visitors from neighboring tribes, or others,—in honor of the self-torturers, or perhaps of others, too. At one Sacrifice Dance, Singer was allowed by her husband, Crooked Arm, to be present because her mother's brother was to participate (apparently as a self-torturer) in it. "I gave," she said, "a dress and a blanket in my uncle's honor. I put them down and a woman grabbed them immediately. When nobody grabbed the things, someone would go around and give them to old people. Most of the stuff was just piled up and then all of it was given away. If there were visitors present from another tribe, they would be given some of the stuff. Someone told that woman right there that she should not have grabbed those things, but they were not taken away from her. People used to give away even horses at a Sacrifice Dance." Coming Daylight's uncle, Crow Bull, gave an Assiniboine, Old Man Pigeon Toes, a horse at a Sacrifice Dance in which her husband, Little Man, took part in the "sham Battle." "Through these presents," she added, "Old Man Pigeon Toes claimed relationship with Crow Bull and called me 'grandchild.' The Assiniboine are worse than the Gros Ventres for claiming relationships!" D96* 431 ●

As is obvious, it cost a vower, particularly the principal vower, a great deal to put up a Sacrifice Dance, and the occasion was also a considerable drain upon the resources of his relatives. Perhaps this, rather than any ritual prohibition, was the reason why, D96*

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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the blow struck on the badger. Both songs were sung by The Boy for the recordings. Apparently at other times during the Crazy Dance rites,—about 10:00 a.m., 2:00 p.m. and 5:00 p.m. according to Coming Daylight,—the badger skin was given a blow, but clear details were not obtained by us.

Between whiles during the Crazy Dance, when no specific ceremony or observance was going on, there was very lively good-time dancing, the dancers "jumping up and down" to the accompaniment of the above-mentioned deer-hoof rattlers. One such song, No. 61, was recorded as sung by The Boy, it has just one word in it: meaning: "I poured water all over him." The song is supposed to have been composed by the enemy-friend of some Crazy Dancer and sung about him. The reference in the case is to the prohibition against bathing and "touching water" by Crazy Dancers.

What rites, if any, were peculiar to the second day of the Crazy Dance we did not discover. The third day, according to The Boy and Thick, was the day on which payment of horses, robes, clothes and so forth, "the best of everything" was made and in generous quantity, to the grandfathers. The goods would be piled up and the horses picketed nearby, for all to see. Participants who "brought no presents then were looked down upon as no good." Singer mentioned only the presents given to the grandfathers, but The Boy and Thick stated that the grandfathers on their part also gave "presents" to the Crazy Dancers and that the transaction was "really a trade." In accord with the general Gros Ventre pattern of trade and gambling as well as of remuneration for ritual services rendered, payment to the grandfathers was expected to be made on the spot and in full; promises to pay at some future time and payment by installment were barred.

Before we take up the rites and observances peculiar to the fourth and last day of the Crazy Dance, it seems advisable to cover certain ones whose exact place in the ceremonial sequence we are unable to determine from our field evidence. These are: the ceremonial feeding of the dancers, the giving of presents in honor of the dancers, the sweat-lodge rite, talking backward, and the sex-test.

There was no fasting during the Crazy Dance; on the contrary

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to jump on them," simulating copulation, to the amusement apparently of the other "cows." Whether the chief vower and the "boss" took part in the dancing is not clear,—more probably they did not.

Intervals between the dancing were given over to smoking, chatting, feasting, and fun-making. In more modern times at least the women smoked for pleasure. The dancers were each expected to bring food to the dance, and feasting was an important element, the singers at the back of the lodge faring particularly well. During these intervals, too, the women would play all kinds of tricks on one another, such as taking some woman's belongings and hiding them. They would have "lots of fun," "laughing all the time" and "making lots of racket."

Apparently it was customary for relatives of dancers in the Women's Dance, as in other sacred Dances, to give away presents to third parties in honor of the dancers.

The more public and more spectacular episodes of the Women's Dance, as of the Sacrifice and Crazy Dances, occurred on the fourth and last day. To these features we now turn.

The "cows" and the "bull," all wearing their headdresses and accompanied by the "calves," left the dance lodge and went in a bunch to look for water in the creek and to drink. The "bull" followed to the rear, herding the "cows," and if one of the latter started to stray she would be punched back with the herd. Part of the time at least, the "cows" were "bent over, dancing like animals, and going on hands and knees." The "bull" would run after different "cows" and "jump on them," in mimic copulation. Coming Daylight, as a "calf" was told to follow one of the "cows" as her "mother" and try to nurse, but the "bull" chased her away when she approached her mother. In general, the "calves" were supposed to keep to the side, out of the way of the "bull."

After the drink at the creek, came the pantomime buffalo drive. The two "hunters" (cf. supra, p. 245) would make a fire outside the camp circle up-wind from the women, and as the women got the smell of the smoke, the "hunters" on horseback drove them, as in a real buffalo drive, and shot the "cows" or some of them with blunt arrows that did not hurt. The "cows" who had before-

3: Cooper E-5 (1938-1940) 1957
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a woman, one of her adult male kin might be chosen by her to have sexual intercourse with the woman transferee.

To judge from the many anecdotes in circulation about this sex element in transfer payment, anecdotes dating mostly from quite recent decades in the memory of informants, it was a very common topic of gossip and of grapevine communication.

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Transfer of power by gift, appears on the whole to have been much more common than transfer by sale. This accords with the general Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of other kinds of property. The Gros Ventre sold little; he gave much. Property changed hands within the tribe much more by donation than by barter.[16]

Gifts of power were made either to relatives or to friends, and while the giver still had his or her health, though perhaps of advanced age, and not ordinarily at least, on his death bed. A number of cases of offer to transfer by gift doctoring and love power during the possessor's lifetime have been previously given. War power, according to The Boy, "was commonly given, without payment, to a son or brother." "War medicine," according to Al Chandler, "was passed down from generation to generation; Bull Lodge gave his sons (Curly Head and Otter Robe) their war powers. Curly Head was a medicine man but Otter Robe was more of a warrior. Little Man, my adopted father, had some kind of war medicine from his brother, when his brother got killed Little Man took this medicine (a sparrow-hawk and a shirt) from him to keep it, and to use it."[17] While war power might pass down in a family, we obtained no clear instance of such transmission by inheritance proper, in the sense of transfer to take effect only upon the death of the transferrer.

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Our data, all from The Boy, on loan and delegation of power, as distinct from outright transfer, are meager. "An owner of power to be lucky in warfare so as not to be shot could lend this to somebody, and if the owner were going to die he could tell the borrower to keep it." "Sometimes, when a man with medicine power was appealed to come and doctor somebody, he could say to his wife:

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[16] For details, see Flannery, 1953, pp. 80-87.

[17] Some of Bull Lodge's war medicines are illustrated in Flannery, 1953, Plate 3; cf. also p. 92.

7: Flannery E-5 (1940, 1945) 1947
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of the society. The officers were free to transfer their ceremonial equipment to other members whom they would select. Following the typical Gros Ventre pattern of transfer of ownership, the recipient would present as lavish gifts as he could afford to the donor while the relatives of the recipient showed their appreciation of the favor to their kinsman by giving away expensive gifts in his honor. All of this took place publicly at the dance.

Particular dances and songs were attached to each office and the owners of the ceremonial drumsticks were required to know in correct order all the numerous songs and to provide the musical accompaniment for the whole ceremony. These four drumstick owners were joined in certain of the songs by four women singers selected from among the wives of the Wolf-men. The owners of the various objects were responsible for the proper care thereof, the crow-belts and the drum receiving most respect. When not in use, the crow-belts were kept wrapped in special bundles in the lodges of their respective owners, but were hung outside when the owner's wife was in her menstrual period. Moreover, those who danced wearing the crow-belts were obliged to refrain from sexual relations for two or three days previous to the dancing and, before donning the belts, to make a smudge of sweet-grass to incense themselves and the crow-belts. The drum, too, received special attention. One informant speaks of it as having been "nicely decorated," and we know from Kroeber's description [9] that the trimming was very similar to that of the Assiniboine Grass dance drum.[10]

Procedure. The actual dancing took place in a special circular dancing-place in the center of the camp circle. This "corral," as it was sometimes referred to, was constructed from several lodge covers, but was open at the top and the entrance thereto was at the east. The tipi of the drum-keeper was put up nearby. Opposite the opening of the "corral" was the place of honor where sat the officials,—with the exception of the sword owners, who with their assistants were at either side of the entrance. The

[9] Kroeber, loc. cit., p. 238.

[10] Lowie, R. H., The Assiniboine, AMNH-AP 4, pt. 1, 1909, p. 67.

796 be repeated so that it was something of an ordeal. The sword owners would see to it that the dancers kept up, prodding the laggards until the series of songs had been completed.

[533] [177] The singers themselves had a smoking song, one of the few songs of the Grass dance for which words were adopted along with the tunes [11] from the Assiniboine. This song indicated a period of rest and relaxation for all but it was required that one of the officers provide the pipe and mixture for the singers.

Any member who left the dancing-place was obliged to surrender some piece of personal property as insurance that he would return. If he did not come back, the property was forfeit.

796 [43] 586 Another distinctive feature of the earlier Grass dance was the throwing away of property and especially of wives. The term "throwing away" is appropriate because a stick was held in the hand and after the holder publicly announced what the stick represented he would throw it to the ground. If, for instance, a member of the society had decided to give away his wife he would take a stick and say: "Here is so-and-so (naming the woman)" and throw the stick down. Sometimes another member would pick up the stick, thus indicating that he was taking this woman, but occasionally it happened that no one grabbed her and in such case the wife in question would return to live with her own relatives. The man who so renounced his wife was supposed to be through with her for good. It was said by informants, however, that once in a while, provided the wife had not been claimed 522 by another, the husband would want her back again. An in- 796 stance in illustration of this point was told to me. A man who 586 stood to my informant in the relation of enemy-friend [12] had so 572 disposed of his wife at a Grass dance. Some time later my informant saw the couple together again. My informant took ad-

[533] [177] [11] Most of the Gros Ventre Grass dance songs have no words proper. This contrasts with the Arapaho Grass dance songs, as my informants are well aware. The difference is perhaps due to the influence on the Arapaho of the Ghost Dance religion (cf. Kroeber, A. L., The Arapaho, AMNH-B 18, pt. 4, 1907, p. 320), which scarcely affected the Gros Ventres.

[572] [12] This was a joking and rivalry relationship entered into by presenting to a fellow tribesman an object captured from the enemy.

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vantage of the occasion, as she had the right to do, to make fun of her enemy-friend without his being able to retaliate. She took a handful of horse manure and rubbed it all over his face saying, "Oh! All of us at the Grass dance saw you throw her away, why are you going with her again?" and in this way called attention to the fact that he was not so "brave" as he had pretended to be.

Another informant stated that she and her sister were just able to escape the embarrassing experience of so being given away. They were both living with a man who was a prominent member of the Wolf society. One of his fellow-members, however, came to the two women and told them that their husband planned on throwing them both away at the forthcoming Grass dance. My informant was very angry to get this news and said to her sister: "We will get ready and get rid of him first!" Whereupon they packed their belongings and taking their own horses went quickly to their mother's brother. My informant said that this man who was going to throw them away tried many times to speak to her thereafter but she always turned away and refused to listen, thinking to herself: "Well, there are plenty of other men."

As a final point in the discussion of the earlier form of the Grass dance, the custom of members giving away presents in honor of their loved ones should be mentioned. This was a purely voluntary procedure and could be done by any member who wished to do so at any performance of the Grass dance. The following is a typical example of how this was carried out. The same informant last mentioned, married another member of the Wolf society not long after the incident she described above, and had been selected as one of the four women singers for the Grass dance. At one performance she was holding her infant daughter, her first child by this marriage, as she sang. Her husband, wishing to honor his little daughter, told a war story, went to his wife and took the child in his arms and, going to the center of the dancing-place, gave away a horse to one of the Assiniboine who happened to be visiting at the time of the dance.

Such was the form of the Grass dance as carried out by the

796 178 [688] sing a song out of the prescribed order, the "chiefs" would stop them at once, announce the mistake and what fine was to be demanded of the singers. Were the four women singers performing at that time, they too were penalized.

[534] The owners of the drumsticks cooperated with the owner of the drum whose special duty it was to care for this instrument and to have it in repair and ready for use at any time it was needed.

The concepts pertaining to the crow-belts, spoon, fork and whistle remained unchanged. The owners of these regalia treated them with the same respect as of old. Additional ceremonial equipment had been introduced in the form of four feathered war-bonnets, two of which were owned by men and two by women. There was a special little ceremony connected with the two bonnets owned by women. Early in the dance two outstanding warriors were selected to take these bonnets from their owners, dance four times around the rack where they were hung in front of their owners, and then hand them to the first two women sitting at the left of the door. When it was time to dance these women would don them and wear them throughout that dance, then pass them on to the next two, and so on, until everyone had had a chance to wear them.

796 178 624 Finally, there were two announcers, one who called out what he was directed to say by any of the men, and the other who publicized any statement to be made on behalf of the women.

All of these individuals were considered as office-holders in the Grass dance and, as formerly, each was free to transfer the office [622] to anyone he considered suitable to succeed himself. There was no regular term of office even for the "chiefs" and the transfer was described as purely voluntary. Apparently, however, there was a certain amount of consultation among the officers, when one of them decided to transfer his office, in order to agree on a well-qualified successor. Among other things it was necessary to consider the financial status of the individual, especially for those to take over the higher offices. Not only did the recipient heap property upon the donor, but according to the older pattern too, [431] the relatives of the recipient would give away horses and so on

in his honor, and there were certain obligations connected with some of the offices in the newer form of the Grass dance, such as payment for the privilege by the black-dress wearers of being invited to come near the fire in the center and eat dog flesh. Furthermore a new "chief" would almost without exception provide the wherewithal for a whole dance to show that he was worthy of the office.

The procedure of transfer was similar for each office. If, for instance, one of the four "chiefs" had decided he had held this position long enough, at one of the dances he would order the transferring song to be sung. He, together, with the other three, would rise and dance around more or less deliberately and in a dignified manner. When these four reached the man who was to receive the office, each of the other three would make a motion toward the recipient as though helping him to his feet, while the donor himself would actually take his hand and assist him to arise. They then led him around the dancing place and finally installed the new officer in the place of honor vacated by the donor. It was customary, as the donor approached the region where the recipient was sitting, for everyone in the vicinity to bow his head as though making himself inconspicuous. None of them was supposed to know ahead of time on whom the choice would fall and, according to Gros Ventre etiquette, it would be very bad form for anyone to seem eager to receive an office, or any kind of honor for that matter.

Changes in procedure. In this later period the Grass dance was held sometimes out of doors in a circular space enclosed by wagons, at other times in a large log building, the ground plan of which was as nearly round as it could be made. It was remarked in this connection that the modern rectangular community hall at Hays, on the Reservation, was no good for Gros Ventre ceremonies, including the Grass dance, "because everything we did was in a circle." The present almost circular community hall at Lodge Pole is considered much more satisfactory. The seating arrangements were very similar to those described for

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songs as many times as they pleased, and when tired of that one switched to the others. There was no intermission and the dancers got no rest, even the old women would stand up and dance in one place and the old men would be yelling and calling out from where they sat. It was evidently a very lively scene. The dancers would sweat and get tired, but still there would be no let up. Finally the four wearers of the feathered war bonnets, —two men and two women,—would begin voicing appeals to the four "chiefs": "Please do something to stop this dance!" But the "chiefs" did not act right away. At last one of them would get up and walk around until he approached the wearer of a war-bonnet. He would then remove the bonnet and the people were glad and would cheer and yell, but this was not yet the end. They kept on dancing until a second of the "chiefs" got up and removed a war-bonnet from another of the wearers, which finally brought the Ringtail dance to a close.

It was said that while the women who wore black dresses could have answered the appeal to stop the dance, as a rule they would have hesitated to do so because the ones who took upon themselves this privilege would have to pay heavily for it. When the people had quieted down after the strenuous dance, those who had removed the war-bonnets would get up and announce what they were paying for having done so. One might have said, for instance: "All right. I will kill a beef for the next dance," or "I will give money" and name the sum. He could donate whatever he wished, but it was understood that it would be something really substantial. My informants explained that although the Ringtail dance was a regular feature of the Grass dance program, the "punishing songs" were not sung every time because "the reason for singing them was that the people hoped to have a Grass dance again soon and wanted an elaborate affair and so the singers had to use discretion; if the 'chiefs' happened to be in a good financial condition at the time, they made them 'shell out' in that way."

The owners of the ceremonial drumsticks retained the smoking song as described for the earlier period. It was the "chiefs" who

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to provide food for the next dance. If he failed to redeem it by such promise, he had one more chance to do so by appearing at the following dance. If he did not show up on that occasion the announcer was told to call out: "The one who owns this bridle (or belt, or gun, etc.) does not want it." Whereupon the article would be thrown in the fire and destroyed.

Although the custom of "throwing away" wives gradually died out, the giving away of valuable property to honor loved ones continued and was elaborated. The following is only one example from many which might be cited as illustrative of attitudes. The informant is now a man in his early seventies. He stated: "When I was a young man I never went to these social affairs. After I married my wife would go with my older brother every time there was a Grass dance, but I would stay at home. This brother of mine used to get after me for not taking part. He would say: 'It is bad to be the way you are. When there is a dance or anything going on, go and look on. You don't necessarily have to dance, but at least be present.' One time in later years the Cheyenne came to visit and of course the Gros Ventres put on a dance for them. I decided to go and for the first time I joined in. When my brother saw me he got up and said: 'Well, my friends, I have been asking my brother to look on and to take part in these dances, and I have never succeeded. But today I see him at this dance and I am glad he is here. I am glad he is joining with us.' Then my brother went out and brought to the dancing-place a new yellow-wheeled buggy and a set of harness he had just purchased, and announced: 'Now, because my brother has joined the dance I am proud he did, and in his honor I am giving away this buggy and harness to the visitors.' Then my brother's wife announced: 'I am happy that my brother-in-law is joining the dance. I will give a beef to the visitors so they will kill it and have meat to eat.' Of course I felt embarrassed. It was hard on me because I thought everybody was looking at me and I sweated. Afterwards I told my brother: 'I didn't go in there for the purpose of having you give away all that stuff in my honor!' But he replied: 'Well, that is the way of our people

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796 178 431 and we follow that. But don't stop going. You went once, so keep going.' And so I did go and when I noticed that at nearly every dance my brother gave away beef or horses—he was certainly a generous man—I started to follow his example. It got so that whenever there was a dance I was the first one there and I used to give away all kinds of things. For my adopted daughter, for instance, I gave beef, horses, and money at different times."

796 178 The final event of the program of the Grass dance during the later period was a dance by one of the owners of the feathered war-bonnets who, to the accompaniment of a special song, stepped toward the door, made three passes towards the latch and on the fourth actually opened the door, took off the bonnet and went out. Everyone by that time would be standing up ready to go with their bundles and babies. It was remarked that since they usually started the Grass dance about one in the afternoon and stopped only well after midnight, they had plenty of time for all these things.

796 178 858 In this section we have dealt only with the main differences between the earlier and later forms of the Grass dance as practised by the Gros Ventres. Other minor changes were introduced from time to time, one being that of allowing children on the dancing floor. This will be briefly described merely to indicate the latitude allowed to the individual in the later period during which the Gros Ventre Grass dance flourished, and to illustrate the mechanism by which some, at least, of the changes could have been actually accomplished. My informant, who had held important offices in the Grass dance and who is a man of prominence, said that, up to the time he acted in this matter, it had been the duty of the owners of the whips to take children bold enough to mingle with the dancers and drag them off the floor by force. It was obvious to my informant that the children were anxious to dance so at one of the performances he tied a bunch of paper money to the amount of $50 on the end of a buggy whip and had the announcer call out that he was going to buy for the children the privilege of joining in the dancing; that he was not only paying for this by giving the money toward the next per-

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others to the left forming a circle inside the dancing-place where they sat. The two prominent warriors, having been assisted in dismounting, took up their places, one on each side of the entrance, holding whips in their hands. It was their duty to rouse any lagging dancers, whipping them if necessary. Each member had his own rattle, of peculiar shape but painted with individual designs, which he waved about as he danced. The wives of some of the dancers joined the four singers in singing certain of the dance songs. Two of the youngest members acted as *atsa'an* (waiters) tending to the fire, getting water, and so on. Occasionally during the dance a woman relative of one of the participants would rush up to him, throw down a blanket or some other gift in his honor, grab his rattle and dance for a short time. Members of the other society did not join in the festivities or partake of the feast, in spite of the fact that most of the provisions for the latter had been donated by some of them.

At some future date, however, the Wolf-men would agree that the time was auspicious for them to have a dance and "get even" with the Stars. They would of course have their own songs, sung in front of the lodges of prominent members of the Star society, but otherwise the procedure was identical, including their accompaniment by two outstanding warriors, the "snake-dance," the arrangement of the lodge in the center of the camp-circle, and so on. The Wolf-men differed from the Stars in their actual dance in that they did not have rattles and in dancing seemingly intended to portray wolves, placing one hand on the forehead and the other at the back to represent the animal's tail.[14]

The adoption of the Grass dance meant merely that the more elaborate dog ritual, with its regalia and greater degree of organization, replaced the dance of the Wolf-men although the begging preliminary and so on remained the same. So far as we can see, at the time of its adoption, the Grass dance was a case of pure substitution and one that fitted readily into the cultural situation. First of all, according to Lowie's information, the Assini-

[14] I am deeply grateful to my colleague, John M. Cooper, who generously placed at my disposal his field notes on the Wolf society.

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the Grass dance may have seemed appropriate to the Gros Ventres as reminiscent of the feather headdress worn by the participants in the Women's Dance belonging to the series of vowed Sacred Dances. But regardless of the possible symbolism, these four offices, plus the four others allotted to women,—two whip owners and their two assistants,—gave the female sex a fair degree of recognition, and probably reflect the newer economic status of women which came about with the changing concept of inheritance. Formerly women, of course, had a right to their own property, but acquisition thereof was mainly through their own manufacture, such as clothing, or through the relatively rare gift of a horse or so. They did not come in for any valuable property through inheritance and a widow in those days was not even entitled to any of her deceased husband's belongings.

The holding of office in the Grass dance thus offered one of the very few means remaining for acquisition of status by the individual. The frequent transfer of offices meant that there was opportunity for many individuals within each category,—mature men, older warriors, young men, women,—to enjoy such public recognition.

Public display of generosity in giving away property to honor a loved one, which became such a marked feature of the Grass dance in its later phase, carried on and accentuated the method most common in older Gros Ventre culture for the gaining of individual prestige. Formerly there were many opportunities for this kind of ostentatious liberality,—when a pipe or a painted lodge was transferred, when a warrior returned from accomplishing brave deeds, when a person was participating in one of the Sacred Dances, when a person was named, when a child's ears were pierced, and so on. At such times the relatives publicly gave away as much of their property as they possibly could,—not to the recipient of the pipe, the brave warrior, the participant in the Sacred Dance, et al.,—but to someone else in his honor. Everybody would know what was given and by whom; people would make such comments as: "So-and-so is a fine man. He surely must think a lot of his relative—look at all the things he

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gave away in his honor." When first adopted the Grass dance offered only one such opportunity—and a relatively minor one. As times changed, however, the Grass dance provided practically the sole occasion for gaining prestige while at the same time carrying out the old pattern of kinship obligation by enhancing the prestige of relatives.

The possibility in the later form of the Grass dance of paying for privileges, such as locking the door, or whipping those who did not get up to dance, gave further scope for the acquisition of prestige through liberality, as did also, of course, payments at transfer of office.

It was estimated by our informants that around 1900 as much as a thousand dollars in goods and cash changed hands at a single performance of the Grass dance. At that time it was not uncommon for the dance to be held at weekly intervals. So long as the Gros Ventre were relatively prosperous and had property to display and exchange according to the older patterns, the Grass dance continued to function. With increasing poverty, however, along with other factors such as the changing points of view and interests on the part of the younger generation, and the dying out of the older warriors, the Grass dance, the core of which was the dog ritual, gradually paled off leaving but the remnants of some of the round dances which had been added to the Grass dance as originally adopted from the Assiniboine.

Summary

Between 1875 and 1880 the Gros Ventres received the Grass dance from the Assiniboine. From the date of adoption up to about 1890 the Grass dance was performed only by members of one of the two soldier societies and the custodians of the ceremonial equipment were the officers. Offices were transferred among members according to the old Gros Ventre pattern.

The essential core of the Grass dance was the dog ritual, a ceremonial eating of dog flesh, carried out by the owners of the equipment with the assistance of four warriors selected from among the lay members. Other features of the program at each

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other features of the program at each performance of the Grass dance included the "punishing" dance, the smoking song, the forfeiture of property, the "throwing away" of property represented by sticks, gift-giving in honor of loved ones.

In 1890 changes in the form of the Grass dance began to be noticeable. By 1900 the Grass dance included all in the tribe who wished to participate. The official personnel had been expanded to include four "chiefs," four war-bonnet owners, two owners of ceremonial black dresses, two women whip-owners and two female assistants. Transfer of all offices was, however, carried out as before.

The dog ritual continued unchanged to be the highlight of the program. Perhaps the most obvious change in procedure was the inclusion of round dances, especially the Ringtail dance, in which both men and women participated and for which "punishing" songs had been devised. The smoking song and the forfeiture of property were retained, but with some elaborations. Although the "throwing away" of property gradually disappeared, the gift-giving in honor of relatives was very much emphasized. Other very minor changes were inaugurated at intervals up until about 1916.

The changing functions of the Grass dance coincide with the changing form and can likewise be considered as of two periods, —the first from 1875–80 to 1890; the second from 1890 to 1916.

In the first period the function of the Grass dance was a relatively minor one. It was adopted, and fitted into place, as a substitute for the simpler and less colorful dance of the Wolf soldier society, and paralleled the dance of the other soldier society, the Star society. In view especially of the preliminary "begging" songs, the Grass dance seemingly was the expression of but one phase of the intense rivalry between the two soldier societies.

With the extinction of the buffalo in 1884 came the breakdown of the older culture. By 1890 not only had most of the public religious rites disappeared, but the social organization was greatly altered. As the economic basis was changed, the nomadic life and the camp circle were abandoned, and the two soldier societies no

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796 longer existed. The dance of one of them, the Grass dance, how-
178 ever, survived. In its changed form the Grass dance filled the void in social life during the transition from old to new.

With the admission of all to membership and through the addition of round dances in which all could actively participate, the Grass dance met the needs for group recreational outlets and for expression of social solidarity.

796 As the sole surviving institution which carried the concept of
178 graded offices and their transfer, the Grass dance met the need of
554 the individual for status along traditional lines. The expansion of offices allowed for the recognition of types of ability formerly premiated and opened the way for younger men as well as for women in emphasizing different kinds of ability.

Finally, the Grass dance met the need of the individual for prestige in accordance with the older pattern by offering opportunity for ostentatious liberality. By bestowing gifts publicly
● [431] at the Grass dance, one could gain the coveted reputation for generosity, while at the same time fulfilling a substantial part of one's obligation to kinsmen.

796 The Grass dance continued to function in this way up to about
182 1916, after which time it began gradually to pale off, and to practically disappear by 1920. The few round dances carried on at present under the name "Grass dance" bear no appreciable relationship to the lively and colorful performances that are remembered by the older Gros Ventres as having been so stimulating and enjoyable.

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and, each time he attempted to get to his knees, one of two women who had already reached the scene would strike him on the buttocks with the flat side of a hatchet, making an insulting remark, and both would laugh. Coming Daylight hesitated at some distance from where the other two were gloating over the fallen enemy. When one of them, Woman Chief by name, saw her she ran to her saying: "Why are you standing so far off?" She grabbed her by the arm and pushed a big club into her hand, saying: "He is still alive—you will do a great thing. *Ahe:ya'!*" Woman Chief forced Coming Daylight to strike him.

While both Woman Chief and Coming Daylight closely approximated the ideal for women as faithful wives and efficient workers who gave generously of their material goods to and on behalf of their relatives, they seemingly differed in temperament. Woman Chief was known as a very brave woman, and Coming Daylight was frank in admitting she would never have dreamed of doing the kinds of things for which Woman Chief was renowned. One of the latter's exploits, for example, was as follows. The Gros Ventres and Crow were allies in an encounter with the Piegan. The battle was in full force, but one Crow had withdrawn and was sitting motionless astride his horse at some distance from the melee. Woman Chief, who in contrast to most women was always well mounted, dashed up to the Crow, grabbed his wand from his hand, and rode pellmell into the thick of the battle, counting coups right and left. So brave was she considered in having really risked her life that she was accorded the distinction, most unusual for a woman, of being led around the camp circle with the victorious warriors. Furthermore, so many people came to sing in front of her lodge that she and her relatives, to show their appreciation of the honor, were forced to give away as much property as though she were a man. Judging on the basis of other biographical material, there can be no doubt that she gloried in her reputation and took every opportunity to enhance it. She was one to whom the more violent aspects of Gros Ventre culture were exceedingly congenial.

If we compare and contrast these two women we can say that insofar as the patterns of Dionysian configuration are the basis of the comparison, their behavior exhibits opposite extremes, the one going beyond the average in the direction of the configuration, the other running counter to and participating less than the average therein. Both might be termed deviant personalities in Honigmann's sense of the term,[2] one overplaying and the other underplaying modal behavior in these selected patterns. Nevertheless, neither seems to have been a misfit insofar as each represents an extreme of socially accepted or sanctioned behavior within those patterns. If, for instance, Coming Daylight had been completely negative, and refused, say, to carry out at least the culturally defined minimum for mourning, had she, in addition to refusing to mutilate herself for the recovery of her ill relatives, neglected as an adult even the safe and less strenuous means to that end, she would have fallen without the pale, so to speak, and have been a misfit. If, at the opposite end of the scale, Woman Chief had gone further in the direction of masculinity, had she actually gone on raiding expeditions and herself stolen horses from the camp of the enemy, had she learned to shoot the bow and arrow or gun, or had she so much as adopted the vocabulary and/or pronunciation proper for males in the Gros Ventres language, she would have been carrying things too far. She, too, would have been dubbed a misfit.

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